(b) whether PETA (People of the Ethical Treatment of Animals), the US based group has launched its campaign with an international denunciation of the Indian Leather trade by saying that in a land where cows are "Sacred" thousand are subjected to agonising abuse to serve the leather industry, whcih exports to US, Britain among other countries, and

(c) if so, what is the reaction of the Governemnt of India thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The Government is aware of the news item which appeared in the Hindustan Times dated 16th February 2000. PETA (People of the Ethical Treatment of Animals) which is a US based animal rights organisation, has launched campaigns in different countries against wearing of articles made of fur and leather. India being one of the major producers of leather, does find a mention in their campaign.

(c) The Council for Leather Exports (CLE) which is the nodal agency for exports has prepared a action plan to make users of leather products aware of the correct facts. CLE, among other things, also intend to use international television networks for exhibiting films on the subject.

Selling of Government stakes in MRL and BRPL

1101. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are likely to sell its stakes in Madras Refineries Ltd., (MRL) and BRPL to Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. before March, 2000; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) and (b) the matter is under consideration of the Government.